



Developing the 2017-2021 Police and Crime Plan

The draft Police and Crime Plan for 2017–2021 is currently out for consultation. This briefing outlines some of the key themes in the draft plan alongside the emerging picture on funding for crime prevention and the re-configuration of metropolitan police borough command units.

Background

The Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021 is due to be finalised in the spring. The plan will set out what the Mayor wants to achieve in the area of policing and crime and explain to Londoners what they can expect from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

MOPAC, led by the Deputy Mayor Sophie Linden, published a draft plan, '*A Safer City for all Londoners*', at the beginning of December, at the same time opening the public consultation period which will run until 23 February 2017. As well as setting out how the police will work with community safety partners and other criminal justice agencies to reduce crime in the coming period, the draft Police and Crime Plan sets out broad details of the London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF) which supports boroughs in carrying out and commissioning services to tackle and prevent crime. Also discussed in the draft plan is the reconfiguration of local policing known as the 'One Met Model 2020', which is trailing the introduction of larger Command units covering more than one borough. The final Police and Crime Plan will be published in March 2017.

The draft Police and Crime Plan starts by outlining the context that the Metropolitan Police Service operates in and identifies some of the future challenges now emerging. These include; firstly, the changing trends in crime that show whilst "acquisitive crimes" - such as burglary and car theft - have fallen, some types of recorded violence including crimes - such as knife crime, domestic abuse and sexual offences - have increased in London. These types of crimes typically require more resources to investigate and provide support with other agencies for victims. Secondly, patterns in offending reveal a fall in the number of overall offenders, but a rise in the number of reoffenders. Thirdly, the draft plan details how vulnerability is becoming concentrated increasingly in certain places and individuals, for example it states that more than three times as many victims of offences such as burglary, robbery and sexual offences live in the top 10 per cent most vulnerable wards compared to the least vulnerable.

The draft plan also discusses changes in London's population, economy, public expectations of policing and justice and the continued constraints on the MPS1 and wider public sector budget2 which all influence the strategic priorities and decisions for resource allocations in this area.

Analysis

Underpinning the draft Police and Crime Plan are two overarching aims of: a better police service and a better criminal justice service for London.

In order to achieve this the Mayor is proposing a number of things, including the scrapping of the "MOPAC 7" crime targets of the previous mayoralty, which the draft Police and Crime Plan characterises as a 'one size fits all' approach. The new plan proposes replacing them with a framework that is intended to give local areas a greater say over local policing priorities. This is set to mark a move away from London-wide targets to tackle local crime, which the draft plan states resulted in police Neighbourhood Teams focusing on "volume crime" such as burglary and robbery at the expense of "high harm" crimes such as domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation.

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Balancing high harm crime and neighbourhood policing

The proposed framework will prioritise high harm crime as well as enable the local council and residents together with the local police to prioritise which high volume crimes, including anti-social behaviour to focus on. This commitment to enabling local priority setting, as well as providing a minimum of two dedicated Police Constables and one Police Community Support Officer for every ward in London, are at the core of the Mayor's manifesto pledge to restoring real neighbourhood policing and are a central part on the draft Policing and Crime Plan.

The draft also outlines the Mayor's bid to get criminal justice powers devolved to London, so as to improve the service and reduce the number of cracked and ineffective trials. There is also a commitment to addressing over representation of the BAME population in the criminal justice system, to tailoring services for female offenders and to providing appropriate community punishment.

Three top priorities

The draft Policing and Crime Plan identifies three areas of high harm crime for particular focus: Keeping children and young people safe; Tackling violence against women and girls; Standing together against extremism, hatred and intolerance.

Keeping children and young people safe

The draft plan acknowledges the reduction in young people as first time entrants to the criminal justice system for the first time, but also notes the growth in youth reoffending. It recognises that young offenders are also victims, whose vulnerabilities should be safeguarded through early recognition and prevention.

Among the proposed commitments, is an aim to reduce crimes that cause most harm – knife, gangs, sexual abuse and serious youth violence, there is also a commitment to take action against those that offend against children or exploit them.

There is a strong emphasis on the police working with partners to provide early identification, assessment and support. There is acknowledgement that the highest risk groups include those looked after by the local authority and pledges to continue financial contribution to children and adult safeguarding boards in every borough. There is also a promise of joint funding, with the NHS, of two Child Houses for young victims of sexual violence (investigation, medical and emotional support).

1 Between 2010 and 2015 the MPS made £600 million of savings (this included cutting 4,500 PCSOs and back-office staff and selling police owned real estate).

2 London Councils estimate that council funding will have fallen by 63 per cent by 2020 with the size of the funding gap in London local government by 2020 estimated to be in the region of £2 billion.

Tackling violence against women and girls

The proposed commitments for this priority area include a strategy refresh, a public campaign and more funding for advocates and advisors. There is also a stronger focus on taking action against perpetrators than the previous Policing and Crime Plan, including commissioning new interventions aimed at tackling perpetrators' behaviour. The plan also recognises men and boys as victims, including of sexual assaults.

There is also a commitment to further training for first-response MPS officers to domestic calls as early capture of evidence, including video and audio, helps to improve the victim's journey through the criminal justice process and aid early guilty pleas.

Standing together against extremism, hatred and intolerance

The proposed commitments focus on reducing hate crime, including rolling out the Hate Crime Victims' Advocates Service across London, following a pilot scheme in Hackney and Westminster. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that the approach to safeguarding against radicalisation is in line with the city-wide approach to social integration, and includes a commitment to work with the Deputy Mayor for Social Integration to support community cohesion and resilience.

MPS reconfiguration of local policing

Building on the first phase of the MPS transformation programme "Met Change", which contributed to nearly £600 million of cost savings, the MPS, is now developing the next phase, which is called One Met Model 2020. This second phase requires the MPS to make a further £800 million in savings. A key component of the One Met Model 2020 is the restructuring of local policing and the bringing together of services to focus on vulnerability. One component of the new model will be to ensure a minimum of two dedicated ward officers and one PCSO per ward that will be "ring fenced" from abstraction. The MPS is also considering moving from the structure of 32 policing boroughs, each with its own commander, leadership team and other specialist teams to one of fewer larger Basic Command Units with a smaller number of commanders and more centralised specialist teams. The draft Police and Crime Plan details two pilot projects for the larger Command Units; one will encompass the current policing boroughs of Camden and Islington, while the other will include Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.

London Crime Prevention Fund

The London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF), provided by MOPAC, enables boroughs to provide and commission local services prevent and tackle crime. The draft plan commits to maintaining the overall size of funding at the current level of around £72 million from 2017 to 2021 and that this will be administered in two, two-year periods. The funding will be allocated via a need and demand based formula. However, MOPAC has announced that, from year two (2018/19 onwards), 30 per cent of the LCPF budget will be put into a new funding pot to commission pan-London specialist crime prevention services.

The Deputy Mayor has been in dialogue with boroughs on the development of the LCPF and gave assurances at Leaders' Committee in December that there will be engagement with boroughs on how the 30 per cent top-slice will be used.

Commentary

London Councils would encourage boroughs to submit local responses to the MOPAC consultation on the draft Police and Crime Plan, which closes on 23 February. In particular, boroughs may wish consider the local impact of proposals on: neighbourhood policing; the London Crime Prevention Fund; and the relationship between local leaders in the Met and borough councils.

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Boroughs are likely to welcome the clear commitment to ward level policing, which strengthens the opportunities for better engagement with local communities about the issues that concern them most. The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime proposes in her foreword to work with local authorities in setting local policing priorities and boroughs will be keen to see what shape that collaboration may take.

The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime proposes maintaining the LCPF at the current level. A central commissioning pot for specialised services could potentially bring economies of scale that could not be delivered by one borough alone. However the withholding of 30 per cent of the LCPF from April 2018 represents a significant reduction to the amount of funding boroughs previously received and boroughs may face difficult decisions as a result, potentially giving consideration to decommissioning valued local services.

In relation to the One Met Model one of the key concerns for boroughs will be the need to build in senior officer oversight and engagement at borough level, due to the bigger size of the command units and differences in criminal patterns. Boroughs will also be keen to maintain a structure that enables close liaison with police at local level. MOPAC has promised that the pilots will be reversible if they do not achieve their stated aims and it will be important that they are used to draw out learning before any further roll out. Local authority leaders may wish to request relevant performance information so as to identify any problems with the models as well as to measure progress demonstrate progress and proof of concept.

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[A Safer City for All Londoners: Draft Police and Crime Plan 2017 - 2021 consultation](#)

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